

REMARKS

Claims 31-63 remain in this application.

The examiner's indication of allowability for claims 34-36, 38, 40 and 44-49 is gratefully acknowledged.

The examiner has rejected claim 63, questioning how the piezoelectric actuator can be held in compression by the prestressed hollow body when the actuator is not located within the hollow body. In answer to this question, the examiner's attention is politely requested to figure 2 of the drawings, wherein it is shown that actuator 79 is disposed outside the hollow body, and by means of hollow body being under compression, and in compression against one end of the actuator 79, it maintains the actuator under compression. Paragraphs 23 and 43-47 of the specification give a better and more detailed explanation of this relationship.

The examiner has rejected claims 31-33, 37, 39, 41-43, 50-53, 55-57, 60 and 62 as anticipated by Frank et al, WO 99/08330, using US 6,998,761 as a translation of the WO document.

The examiner states that the Frank et al reference shows a first seam (16) plus a second seam. The examiner points to claim 2 and column 6 lines 31-51 of the Frank et al reference to show the second seam. It is not seen how the examiner can come to the conclusion that the reference to Frank et al has two seams. There is nothing in the Frank et al reference which states that there is more than one seam. And further, and even more specifically, Frank et al clearly does not have a second seam which is diametrically opposite the first seam.

With regard to claim 2 of Frank et al, this claim recites that the hollow body has two bunting edges, “ and at least one connecting seam connecting said two bunting edges.” This claim does not recite a second seam. Thus, claim 2 only recites one seam, which as shown in figures 8-11 of Frank et al would be seam 15, 16 or 18, and does not include mention in any way whatsoever of a second seam.

The examiner also refers to Frank et al at column 6 lines 31-51 as evidence of a second seam in Frank et al. But a careful reading of this passage does not reveal any recitation which mentions a second seam in the hollow body. In particular, Frank et al describe nothing at all like the second seam 33, as shown in applicant's figures 5 and 6 and described in paragraph 63 of the specification. The second seam is clearly recited in applicant's claim 31, and is recited to be diametrically opposite the first seam.

As explained in paragraph 63 of applicant's specification, this second seam 33 provides the specific advantage of a mechanism which guarantees that only an axial force will be transmitted to the actuator, that no radial or bending forces will be transmitted to the actuator by the hollow body.

Thus it has been shown that claim 31 recites specific structure which the reference to Frank et al does not have, which specific structure, as recited in claim 31, adds a specific and useful advantage over the structure of Frank et al .

The examiner has also rejected claim 54 as unpatentable over Frank et al in view of Voigt et al '942, claims 57-59, and 61 as unpatentable over Kienzler et al '688 in view of Frank et al, and claim 63 as unpatentable over Frank et al.

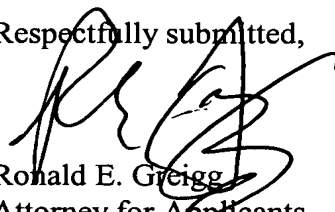
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Reply to Office action of March 21, 2007

In reply to these rejections, it is pointed out that neither of the additional references to Voigt et al nor Kienzler et al includes anything at all like the second seam which is recited in claim 31. Thus there is no possibility that the art cited in the examiner's action could provide a teaching of the structure as recited in applicant's broadest claim 31, which structure, as pointed out above, includes structure which gives the unexpected and advantageous result that the hollow body cannot act on the actuator with any side wise or bending forces.

Since the cited prior art does not teach the structure as recited in the claims of this application, all of the claims should be considered to be allowable.

For the above reasons, consideration of this response and allowance of the claims are courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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